



2020 Camper Parent Handbook

Dates to Remember

Requests for financial assistance

ASAP, preferably by April 1

Full payment & Completed Medical History & Health Form **Due by July 1**

Administrative Mailing Address:

Camp St. Herman
c/o Khalil Samara, *Executive Director*
5 Delaney Drive
Walpole, MA 02081

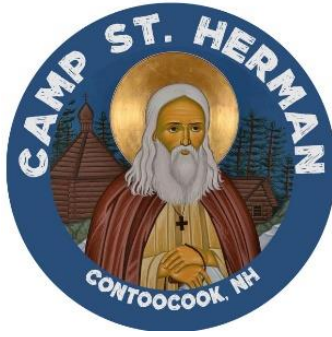
Camp Location:

St. Methodios Faith & Heritage Center
329 Camp Merrimac Road
Contoocook, NH 03229

Email: info@CampStHerman.org
Website: www.CampStHerman.org

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Dear Parent or Guardian,

Christ is in our midst!

We are very excited that you have registered your child (or children) for the inaugural session of Camp St. Herman. Camp is a valuable experience in the growth and development of a young person. More importantly, at Camp St. Herman, our program is centered around the Orthodox Christian faith, and we offer an environment for young people to experience their faith throughout the day: at meals, in the cabins, on the soccer field and in all we do at camp.

Your child's safety is our priority at Camp St. Herman in all aspects: physical, emotional and spiritual. We are thankful that you have entrusted us with the care of your children for the week. The following pages contain information vital to your ability to properly prepare your child and your family for camp this summer at Camp St. Herman. **Please read each section carefully** so that you can properly prepare your camper for their camp experience, and we can be properly prepared to receive and care for them.

We look forward to seeing your child at camp this summer in New Hampshire!

Your servants in Christ,

Rev. Fr. Benjamin Kjendal
Camp Director

Khalil Samara
Executive Director

CAMP ST. HERMAN MISSION STATEMENT

Camp St. Herman transforms the lives of young people & families and nurtures their faith in Jesus Christ through Orthodox Christian community living, worship, education, fellowship, and love.

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

We believe that it is important for our camper parents to be informed and to have confidence in our staff and programs. Safety is always a priority for our ministry. We do this by hiring some of the finest young men and women to serve on our staff; through extensive training and education; having a team of professionals from a variety of disciplines to support our ministry; by having at least one full-time Registered Nurse to run our Health Center; and by providing resources for our parents among other things.

This first year, we will voluntarily follow many of the guidelines set forth by the American Camp Association (ACA), and will apply to receive accreditation for summer 2021. Accreditation by the American Camp Association signifies the highest standards for safety and programming in the camping industry.

We encourage you to visit the American Camp Association's website (www.acacamps.org) for more information about accreditation and the ACA in general. They also have a whole section dedicated to resources for parents and families at <https://www.acacamps.org/campers-families>

In addition to this Camper Parent Handbook, we have a resource page for parents on our website:

<https://www.campstherman.org/parents.html>

We also have **After-Camp Resources** available for Campers, Parents, Clergy/Parish Youth Workers, as well as a summary of our Morning Program Christian Education curriculum on our website. These resources exist to help process the experience of camp.

Please visit: <https://www.campstherman.org/after-camp.html>

PREPARING YOUR CAMPER FOR CAMP LIFE

The camp experience is like other important experiences in life: the better one is prepared, the more one gets out of the experience. This section covers all of the key areas that require attention before your camper leaves home. One of the first things to do, especially with new campers (but returning campers need reminders, too!) is to talk with your camper(s) about what they can expect. Below are a few things you should review with your campers to help ease their transition to camp life.

A Typical Day at Camp

Each session is filled with activities that allow young people to experience a holistic Orthodox Christian lifestyle. Campers experience an average day with cabin wake-up around 7 AM, followed by Matins and breakfast, where as at all meals, we begin and end with community prayer. Songs and playful chants are often heard at mealtimes that help create an atmosphere of love and fellowship. Divided into groups of two or three cabins, the morning program consists of two one-hour sessions, filled with Christian Education classes and other activities such as lives of the saints and chanting.

Lunch is attended by all staff and campers to refuel for an afternoon of sports and fun. All campers choose two or three activities in the afternoon: Arts and Crafts, swimming, soccer, volleyball, basketball, canoeing, just to name a few. The campers get a snack from the Gimme Shop (included in the camper tuition) in the mid-afternoon.

After the afternoon activities, the campers return to their cabins for a quick rest and quiet or social time within the cabin. Evening commences with Vespers where camper/staff participation is not only encouraged but gracefully served, followed by dinner in the Dining Hall.

Each evening we have a campwide program where the campers are entertained and involved in a wide variety of programs such as serenade night, skit/talent night, scavenger hunt, and more. Following evening program, cabin time allows for unwinding and unanswered questions for individual cabins. Contemporary moral issues may be addressed in older cabins while younger cabins are getting needed rest.

Camp Life

Nearly everything about life at camp is different than life at home. Preparing your camper with as much information as possible will be helpful to their adjustment. While giving them a positive preview of their coming experience, let them know that life will be different, and that you want them to gain many new experiences while away. Some of the areas to prepare them for include the following:

Living Arrangements

Campers typically live with twelve to fourteen fellow campers and their counselor in shared quarters. Each cabin has 7 or 8 bunk beds and attached bathrooms with showers. Campers are grouped according to age and gender. **We are unable to accept roommate requests.** One of the best aspects of the camp experience is learning to adjust to group living, making new friends, and getting along as part of a team.

Meals

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are eaten together as a cabin and part of the greater community in our Dining Hall. Rest assured, our menu is both nutritious and attempts to meet the variety of tastes of the campers. Many items will be to your child's liking, some items served may be things your child may never have tried before, while other items may be things they dislike. Please help your camper by relaying your expectation that they will try new things and eat what is served. If for medical reasons there are dietary restrictions or food allergies for your camper, please notify the camp in writing with your camper's Medical History form no later than July 1, so that the Camp Nurse and Kitchen Staff may properly prepare for your camper's arrival.

For a camper with food allergies, the FARE Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan must be completed and signed by both parent/guardian and physician and submitted along with all required healthcare information forms by July 1. This form may be found at <https://www.campstherman.org/camper.html> .

Fasting

As an Orthodox Christian camp, we adhere to the tenets of the Orthodox Christian Faith, and therefore, on prescribed days we follow the fast of the Church in a very simple and humble attempt. Our fasting practice here at Camp St. Herman is to refrain from meats on fasting days. While we recognize that families follow different fasting practices, here at CSH we feel this is a reasonable expectation of all campers and staff to aid us in our spiritual growth. We encourage you as parents to speak with your children about fasting so it is not a surprise while at camp.

Camp Activities

Life at camp takes full advantage of our outdoor setting. Activities include field sports, swimming, canoeing, and more. Rainy days are a frequent occurrence, so rain gear is a must.

Conduct

All campers are expected to act in ways appropriate to an Orthodox Christian setting. While all disciplinary action will be taken to attempt resolution on site, the Camp Director reserves the right to dismiss campers for gross violations of camp rules. Parents will be responsible for arranging and covering costs for their child's early departure.

Independence

Last but not least, one of the major adjustments campers experience is being independent from parents, with typically no contact during the camping session. This can be one of the most positive experiences they can have at camp and one which can be invaluable in the process of growing up. Be aware that as a parent, you may need to prepare for this as much—if not more—than your camper!

ARRANGEMENTS TO MAKE BEFORE CAMP

Fees

Balance of all payments is due by July 1, or the camper's spot may be offered to those on the waitlist. Special payment arrangements can be made by emailing us at info@campstherman.org and are subject to approval by the Camp Director, but such requests must be received prior to the July 1 deadline. All balances will be billed to the camper's parents, regardless of any parish subsidies, so parents are encouraged to ensure that all parish subsidies are paid before the July 1 deadline to avoid losing their camper's spot in the session. Checks should be made payable to "NER Missions Council" and earmarked with the camper's name(s). Payments may also be made using a credit card on our website at <https://www.campstherman.org/payment.html>.

Financial Assistance Information

Camp St. Herman is committed to ensure a young person is not denied the opportunity to attend camp due to financial concerns. Please contact your parish priest first to see what scholarships are available through your parish or diocese. You may also request additional scholarship assistance using our Financial Assistance Request Form (available on our website at <https://www.campstherman.org/camper.html>). Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns at info@campstherman.org. All financial assistance requests are confidential, and awards are only given on the basis of financial need.

Cancellation and Refund Policy

We appreciate prompt notification in the event of cancellation. Cancellations before July 1 will receive a full refund less the deposit. After June 1, refunds of tuition payments may be requested in writing and will only be granted if a replacement for the open spot is found, except in cases of family emergency (not family choice). The deposit is non-refundable and non-transferable.

Health Care

Your camper's health and safety are our #1 priority. To adequately serve our campers, our health care staff needs enough time to prepare for their arrival. Therefore, all healthcare information including completion of the Health History and Medical Examination form, and, if applicable, the completed and parent/guardian and physician signed FARE Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan form are due by July 1. If you are unable to meet this July 1 deadline, please contact us at info@campstherman.org.

Both of these forms are available on our website at <https://www.campstherman.org/camper.html>

Our Camp Nurse reviews all medical forms in advance. Forms are occasionally lost in transit when being sent, so please make a copy of the completed form before mailing it to the Camp Office. If your child has any medical issues or conditions requiring special accommodations at camp, please contact us as soon as possible. Please do not allow embarrassment to prevent us from providing adequate care for your child in your absence. The form is confidential and the information is only available to the Executive Director, Camp Director, and the Medical Staff.

A medical professional is in residence during the camping season to take care of any health care needs. Upon your camper's arrival, he/she will meet with the Camp Nurse at check-in to review

any medical concerns. All medication (prescription and over the counter) will be collected upon arrival at camp, so please pack them in an accessible location. **Prescription medication must be brought in the original prescription container with the original pharmacy label.**

Health Insurance

All campers should be covered by their family policy. While the Camp St. Herman will act as guarantor, any costs incurred by the Camp in providing required treatment for doctor's appointments, prescriptions, etc., will be billed to the camper's parents or guardian.

Travel Information

Camp is held at the St. Methodios Faith & Heritage Center (329 Camp Merrimac Road, Contoocook, NH 03229). Parents are responsible for providing transportation for your child to and from camp. Arrival and Departure times are:

Arrival Check-in: Sunday, August 9, 2020 between 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm

Departure Pick-up: Saturday, August 15, 2020 between 12:00 noon and 1:00 pm

Photos/Videos

Photos will be taken daily and posted online linked from the camp website. This keeps parents and friends back home informed of the daily activities at camp. Only participants' first names (not last names) will be used on the website. More details on how to access these photos will be announced as we get closer to the camp session.

Throughout your child's stay at Camp St. Herman, staff members will be videotaping footage which will be included in a Camp Video which will be primarily for the participants as a memento of their experience. However, video footage will also be used for purposes of promoting Camp St. Herman and its programs.

Media Consent

Parents must sign a Media Consent Form granting or denying permission for their child's picture and video to be taken for the camp photos and videos and promotional materials for the camp. This form is part of the online camper registration process, where you may read it and grant or deny permission for us to photograph and/or videotape your camper(s).

Sending a First-Time Camper

If this is your child's first trip away for camp, your preparation in advance will go a long way toward helping them have a great experience and minimize the effects of homesickness. We have set up a Parents' Resource page on our website at <https://www.campstherman.org/parents.html> with valuable information to assist you through the process of having your child(ren) attend camp. Please be sure to read "Preventing Homesickness" which may be downloaded from the parent resource page. This article was written by Fr. Michael Nasser, former Camp Director at Antiochian Village (1997-2006) and long-time leader in Youth Ministry. We hope you will read the article and use the suggestions given to best prepare you and your child for their stay away from home.

PACKING FOR CAMP

Snacks and Care Packages

Please do not include snacks or food items of any type in care packages. Snacks and food items can contain allergens that could cause a serious reaction in a fellow camper. We appreciate your understanding in helping us to provide a safe environment for all campers. In addition to full meals three times a day, campers receive an afternoon snack during evening program. The cost of these snacks is included in the camper fee. At camp, packages with food are simply an invitation for rodents and ants to come to a scrumptious dinner. Treats from home also often lead to stomachaches and improper nutrition, and complicate relationships between campers with treats and those without. Please note that any food received will be shared immediately and must be nut-free, and/or produced in a factory that does **not** contain nuts.

Christian Modesty

While camping is of its nature informal, Christian modesty should be your guiding principle when packing for your child's time at camp. Excessively revealing clothing should not be packed as inappropriate clothing will not be permitted to be worn. Inappropriate clothing includes, but is not limited to: crop tops (including racer-razor backs), low-cut fronts, skin tight clothing, half shirts, two-piece bathing suits (or one-piece suits with cutouts), tank tops with less than two finger-width straps, tank tops that show your entire side, shorts cut shorter than a few inches above the knee, low-cut waistlines, clothing bearing inappropriate logos, sayings or advertising, and tank-top undershirts.

We ask that all attire be a sign of respect for one's own self and everyone else in the community.

Because of our outdoor setting with uneven terrain, tree roots, etc, backless shoes (flip-flops, etc.), peep toe shoes (most sandals), and high heels are not safe and should not be packed and are not permitted to be worn at camp. Athletic shoes **must** be worn during Afternoon Program.

Rain is a frequent occurrence so proper rain gear is required so that programs can continue in spite of light rain. As in most of the continental US, mosquitoes in the area may be carriers of West Nile Virus, so we therefore recommend long sleeve t-shirts or other long sleeve shirts during sunset hours when mosquitoes are most active.

Dress for church services are casual and include knee-length skirts, dresses and/or long pants for girls and long pants for boys. Shoulders must be covered and tank tops are not permitted.

We do not recommend bringing expensive or name-brand clothing items to camp. ***Each article of clothing and all gear must be clearly labeled for identification.*** Please write name or initials on all clothing and belongings. Cabin storage space is limited, so each camper should bring no more than two pieces of luggage: one suitcase/duffle bag and one carry-on size, either a small bag or backpack. All items left behind will be given to local charities.

Camper Packing List

- Changes of clothing for at least 6 days, with all items marked in indelible ink or tags
- Basic summer-wear (underwear, socks, t-shirts, shorts)
 - *Be mindful of the length of shorts.*
 - *Let's keep ourselves covered and our focus on Christ in each other!*
- Long pants for church services each day (jeans or sweats are OK)
- Nice outfit and shoes for Divine Liturgy (scheduled for Saturday, August 15).
 - Guys: collar shirt and pants
 - Girls: a dress that covers your knees and shoulders
 - We love dressing up for Liturgy together! But it's also fine to wear casual clothes.
 - Remember no heels!
- Long sleeve t-shirts or other long sleeve shirts (mosquito protection)
- Sturdy tennis/athletic shoes
- Closed-toed shoes/sandals - *Sticks, dirt, rocks and hills make closed-toed shoes necessary to keep our feet safe.*
- Shower shoes - *The only time flip-flops are an excellent idea*
- Modest swimsuit (no two-piece suits or one-piece with cut-outs permitted)
- Sweater, sweatshirt, or lightweight jacket – *it can get cool at night!*
- Waterproof raincoat or poncho
- Sleeping bag, sheet (twin-size) and pillow or (twin-size) set of sheets, blanket and pillow
- Laundry Bag, marked with camper's name
- Two towels, washcloth (one towel for showering, one towel for waterfront)
- Insect Repellent (non-aerosol, 10% max DEET for children 12 and under, 30% max for 13 and up)
- Sunscreen
- Toiletries, including: Comb/brush, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, deodorant (non-aerosol), feminine products
- Flashlight
- *Great optional items:* Bible, camera (marked with name), journal, reusable water bottle, travel games (non-electronic), cards, red prayer book
- Any medicine you take can be given to the nurse at check in

PLEASE LEAVE AT HOME... *(any of these items will be confiscated upon arrival to camp)*

- Food
- All electronics (iPods, cell phones, electronic games, iPads/tablets, etc.)
 - Take this amazing opportunity to be present where you, disconnecting from screens and connecting with the beautiful people around you.
 - You will turn in your phone at check in upon arrival as well
- Jewelry and other valuables, including sports equipment
- All alcohol and tobacco products (including Juuls, e-cigs, dab pens, etc.)
- Immodest apparel
- Dangerous implements, i.e. knives, axes, fireworks, etc.
- Any illegal substances (campers found with any will be sent home immediately)
- Pets
- Any aerosol products (hairspray, deodorant, insect repellent, etc.)

Laundry

Campers will not have their laundry down while at camp, so campers will need to pack enough clothes for the entire week.

Spending Money

There is no need to bring any spending money to camp. All activities during the session are included in the registration fee. We plan to have a small bookstore setup at check-in and pick-up where we will be sell some souvenir items (shirts, icons, etc). But this is only during times when parents are present, so there is no need for campers to have any money during camp.

Lost/Stolen Items

Camp St. Herman is not responsible for lost or stolen items at camp. All personal belongings are the responsibility of the owner. All unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity or thrown away.

DURING THE CAMPING SESSION

Relax!

While your child is at camp, take advantage and enjoy the (temporary) quiet! If you miss your kids, write a letter or two (campers love getting mail!) or go to our website to get information about sending emails to your camper. Relax, knowing your children are in good hands.

Visitation Policy

Please feel free to meet our staff and tour the camp facilities on check-in day. However, because campers often become homesick when they see a parent or family member (even parents of other campers), we ask that there be no other visitors to camp during the regular camping session.

For parents who want a more thorough experience of the Camp St. Herman, we encourage you to attend our Family Camp weekend, October 2-4, 2020, where you may experience camp life as an entire family.

Contact with your child

The active camp schedule prevents regular contact with your camper. Receiving or placing phone calls during the session disrupts the program and often makes homesickness worse, so we do not allow them except for emergency circumstances at the discretion of the Camp Director. Therefore, you will probably not hear from the camp or your camper during the session, and remember, “no news is good news!” If your camper suffers serious injury or illness, you will be promptly notified. This includes any issue requiring off-camp health services or an illness in which a fever lasts for more than 24 hours.

We know it can be hard to “let go,” not knowing what your child is doing during their stay. To give you a non-invasive “peek” in on them, parents and others are invited to check the camp website for daily updates during the camping session at www.campstherman.org. On our website, you can find pictures of campers in action with accompanying narration to fill you in on the day’s events. Please understand that these photos merely give you a snapshot of the day.

Should an emergency requiring communication with your child arise, please call our Executive Director Khalil Samara at 617-470-0546; or call the St. Methodios Center Office at 603-746-4400.

We encourage letter writing both to and from camp, with mail being delivered daily (except for Sundays and national holidays). Sending a letter before your child leaves home is a good idea, as the mail will be waiting for your child on their first full day at camp. Ask questions about camp, but avoid telling your child how much you miss them or problems that may exist at home, as this may spark homesickness. Short declarations of love such as, “We’re so proud of you,” or “We love you,” or “See you real soon!” are just what your child will want to hear.

AFTER CAMP RESOURCES

We have put together After Camp Resources for campers, parents/guardians, parish clergy, youth workers, and anybody in a camper’s life to help process the experience at camp. These resources include suggestions for how to talk with each other to best process and reflect upon the camp experience, and a summary of the Christian Education curriculum which the campers learn during Morning Program. Please visit <https://www.campstherman.org/after-camp.html> for links to these resources.

GETTING YOUR CAMPER TO AND FROM CAMP

Driving Your Camper to Camp

Camp will begin on **Sunday**, August 9, 2020, and check-in will be between 2:00 pm and 4:00 pm. Arrivals at any other time must be approved in advance by the Camp Director. Parents and guardians are welcome to stay and visit the camp grounds until 4:00 PM.

Registration will take place in the Recreation Hall across from the St. George Chapel. The process will include being introduced to your camper’s counselor, meeting the nurse to discuss any health issues and/or turning over all medications which will be dispensed from the Health Center. Please park in the lower parking lot (on your left before the Chapel). After checking-in, our staff will help take your camper’s luggage and get you settled into his/her cabin.

Driving Your Camper Home from Camp

Camp ends on **Saturday** at noon and all campers must be picked up between 12:00 noon and 1:00 pm. Any departures outside of this time frame must be approved in advance by the Camp Director.

Driving Directions

Camp St. Herman takes place at the St. Methodios Faith & Heritage Center located at 329 Camp Merrimac Road, Contoocook, NH 03229. [Click here to get driving directions.](#)

Campers Driving to Camp

If a camper is driving themselves to camp they must turn in their keys to the camp office upon arrival to Camp St. Herman.

CAMP ST. HERMAN CAMPER POLICY FOR ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKING AND BLOGGING WEBSITES

In general, the Camp St. Herman views social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, etc.), personal Web sites, and Weblogs positively and respects the right of campers to use them as a medium of self-expression. If a camper chooses to identify himself or herself as a camper at the Camp St. Herman on such internet venues, some readers of such websites or blogs may view the camper as a representative or spokesperson of the Camp St. Herman. In light of this possibility, the Camp St. Herman requires, as a condition of participation in the camp, that campers observe the following guidelines when referring to the Camp St. Herman, its programs or activities, its campers, and/or other staff, in a blog or on a website:

- 1) Campers must be respectful in all communications (text and photos) and blogs related to or referencing the camp, its employees, and other campers. Any photos or messages that are linked or “tagged” from “friends” and attached to your site(s) or profile(s) that are inappropriate should also be removed.
- 2) Campers must not use obscenities, profanity, or vulgar language.
- 3) Campers must not use blogs or personal websites to disparage the Camp St. Herman, other campers, or staff of the Camp St. Herman.
- 4) Campers must not use blogs or personal websites to harass, bully, or intimidate other campers or staff of the Camp St. Herman. Behaviors that constitute harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, comments that are derogatory with respect to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, color, or disability; sexually suggestive, humiliating, or demeaning comments; and threats to stalk, haze, or physically injure another person.
- 5) Campers must not use these venues to discuss engaging in conduct prohibited by camp policies and an Orthodox Christian lifestyle, including, but not limited to, the use of alcohol and drugs, sexual behavior, sexual harassment, and bullying.

Any camper found to be in violation of any portion of this policy will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal at the discretion of the Camp Director.